

destroy the design of the play in its new form. But the actor will not yield, and Shakespeare, his patience utterly exhausted, says: "Well, have it your own way; I will speak the old text, but for heaven's sake no more in this first act." This is settled upon, and that is how Polonius, who, in the first act is a dignified and wise old gentleman, giving *Laertes* the sagest of advice, becomes "wretched, rash, intruding fool" thereafter, until *Hamlet* wisely kills him off. "Oh, I can see it all," says Bonciucaut, "as plainly as if I had been present, and can trace out in Shakespeare's mind, step by step, the